



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **PURE CREMATION PREPARES FOR CORONAVIRUS**

A pioneer in direct cremation says the revolutionary new style of funeral may help the nation cope with a coronavirus pandemic.

Pure Cremation specialises in direct cremations, a simple and affordable alternative to a traditional funeral in which the deceased is collected, cared for and then cremated without a service or mourners present.

The simple, respectful cremation is held separately from the farewell event for friends and family, allowing them the freedom to create a truly personal memorial event at a time and place of their choosing.

If coronavirus has the devastating impact that some have forecast, then direct cremation could be the answer to helping the country cope with a rapid and significant increase in deaths.

Catherine Powell at Pure Cremation said: "Hopefully the UK won't be badly affected and the COVID-19 virus will be contained.

"But in the event of this becoming a true epidemic, direct cremations could be a responsible way of respectfully observing a loved one's passing.

"Swift cremations will reduce the need for large temporary mortuary facilities at hospitals and help contain the disease. They will also help funeral directors cope with the "double-whammy" of more funerals and fewer staff to arrange and execute them.

"Bereaved families could find that gathering for a funeral service is either unwise or might even be prohibited until the danger of spreading the COVID-19 virus has passed – and of course crematoria would struggle to accommodate all the funeral services that would be needed.

"Direct cremation would be a responsible choice that offers some closure by completing a respectful committal more quickly. This will mitigate the sense of total emotional limbo experienced when committals are delayed – and friends and family can then gather for a celebration of life when it is safe to do so."

Her comments come soon after a Sky News report about how funerals could be streamed online if the coronavirus outbreak becomes a pandemic.

The National Association of Funeral Directors (NAFD) has also said services could be done over the internet if a pandemic is declared to prevent the spread of COVID-19 virus– which has now infected more than 100,000 people worldwide – among mourners.

Pure Cremation's Charlton Park Crematorium, located near Andover, Hampshire, has a ceremonial hall and ante rooms with video conferencing facilities which will allow webcasting of up to 20 unattended committals each day if needed.

"It makes sense to consider ways to prevent vulnerable people being exposed to the virus, and webcasting does achieve this," Catherine added.

Direct cremations are already the fastest growing new trend in funerals because they are cost-effective and offer a degree of freedom to personalise a send-off that is unavailable with traditional funerals. Families and friends can create more meaningful goodbyes, without the coffin – where, when and how they choose.

According to Sun Life's latest Cost of Dying Report 2020 more than four out of ten people would consider a 'no-frills' direct cremation without mourners for their own funeral – if given the choice.

While nearly half of those surveyed did not know they could opt for a simple, respectful, unattended cremation at a much lower cost of a conventional one, yet 42 per cent of people said they would consider it as an option for themselves once they were aware of this option.

These figures lead Pure Cremation to believe that, with the right advice and support, the UK will accept a dramatic rise in direct cremation as an appropriate and practical response, and still achieve the emotionally satisfying farewells that families need.

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